

Representative Ray LaHood, candidate for reelection in Illinois' 18th Congressional District; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks in St. Paul, Minnesota

November 3, 2002

The President. Thank you all. Glad I came. Norm said, "If you come back, we might have a few of my friends over to say hello." [Laughter]

I want you to know I understand that Minnesota is going through a traumatic time. After all, just 9 days ago, you lost a principled Senator, along with his wife and daughter and five other fellow Americans. Paul Wellstone was respected by all who worked with him. He'll be missed by all who knew him.

Now a vote is coming on, in the middle of a State that is mourning. And even though your State is still in mourning, I'm here to remind people from all political parties that you have a duty to vote. In spite of the fact that people still mourn, Republicans and Democrats, independents, people who could care less about political parties, have an obligation in the land of the free to go to the polls and exercise your right as an American.

Now, once you get in that voting booth, I've got a suggestion. [Laughter] The best candidate for the future of Minnesota is your next United States Senator, Norm Coleman.

The best choice for Governor of Minnesota, the best choice for the taxpayers and the schoolchildren, is Tim Pawlenty. And the best choice in a contested race in this part of the world, the best choice for United States Congress, is Mr. John Kline.

It's great for—great to be able to see Laurie Coleman today. She is working hard, along with Norm and their entire family. Proud to meet Mr. and Mrs. Coleman, too. Ms. Coleman said she's a little nervous. [Laughter] I said, "Well, you watch and see what happens next Tuesday."

Norm married above himself, and so did I. [Laughter] Yesterday Laura was here. I want to thank you for such a warm reception she received. I don't blame Norman for bringing her in coming down the stretch. After all, she's done a fabulous job as our country's First Lady.

I'm proud to be up here with three fine Members of the United States Congress: Gil Gutknecht, Mark Kennedy, and Jim Ramstad. I appreciate their service to our country. I appreciate the fact that they're friends. I appreciate the fact they're willing to run.

Most of all, I'm here to thank you all for what you have done and what you're going to do. Many of you have been working hard over the last months, weeks, and days to support the Coleman candidacy. You've been putting up signs. You've been dialing the phones. You've been sending the brochures in the mail. Don't stop. I will promise you this, when you go to your coffee shops or your community centers and urge your fellow Minnesota citizens to go to the polls, you can make a huge impact on this election. You can decide who your next United States Senator and Governor and Members of Congress will be.

And when you go to those coffee shops and community centers, make sure you reach out to discerning Democrats and independent voters. There are a lot of good people who may not call themselves Republicans, who've been impressed, like I have, with the nature of the campaign that Norm Coleman has run. There's a lot of people who may not be Republicans, who've been impressed by the quality of service he gave to the citizens of St. Paul as the mayor of St. Paul.

They know him like I know him, somebody who's willing to get rid of the stale, old, tired name-calling in politics, somebody who's not interested in pitting one group of people against another to get ahead, somebody who's willing to work hard to bring people together for the common good. That's the Norm Coleman I know.

When he held office, he showed what he could do. He performed. He's the kind of fellow who does in office what he says he's going to do. That's refreshing. After all, we are in the house that Norm built.

He kept taxes down. He brought more than \$3 billion of new development into St. Paul. He performed in office. He did so with class. He did so with the one thing in mind: how to benefit all the people of St. Paul. He

understands that in order to create opportunity for all the citizens of this State, that the small-business owner and the entrepreneurs, the backbone of creativity and job growth, no matter where they are in this country—[*applause*].

Pat Boemer owns McGovern's Pub and Restaurant just down the street from here. He knows firsthand how Norm worked with small-business owners to cut the regulations that oftentimes make it hard for people to expand and/or exist. Norm understands the role of small businesses. Because of Norm's help, Pat was able to expand his restaurant, a project that employed 30 people during the expansion and added 35 new permanent jobs. Pat—let me tell you what Pat said about Norm Coleman. I want you to hear what one of your citizens said about this man. He said, "He's a breath of fresh air." And that's the kind of fresh air we need in the United States Senate.

Believe me when I say, we need fresh air in the United States Senate. The future of Minnesota rests with Norm Coleman. Not only do I like to promote somebody who is a good, honorable person; I'm looking for an ally. [*Laughter*] I want somebody from this great State with whom I can work, somebody with whom we can work to help all the people.

We've got some problems here in this country. See, our economy is kind of bumping along. It's not as strong as it should be. Anytime somebody is looking for a job and they can't find work means we've got a problem. And I'm not going to rest until people can find work, until people who want to put food on the table are able to do so.

But it's important to have somebody from this State who understands the role of Government is not to create wealth, but the role of Government is to create an environment in which small businesses can grow to be big businesses, in which this entrepreneurial spirit is strong.

There's a fundamental difference of attitudes in this race. See, Norm and I understand this, that when a person has more money in their pocket, they're likely to demand an additional good or a service. And when they demand a good or a service in the marketplace, somebody is likely to

produce the good or a service. And when somebody produces the good or a service, somebody is more likely to be able to find work.

I need the United States Senator from Minnesota who not only supports tax relief, but is willing to stand with me to make tax relief permanent.

Norm and I understand in Washington, when you hear them talking about the Government's money, they don't understand. See, we're not talking about the Government's money in Washington. It's important to have a Senator understand whose money it is. It's your money. It's the people's money.

I look forward to working with Norm on a lot of issues. We need to get a terrorism insurance bill out that gets our hardhats working again. The terrorists hit us, and as a result, a lot of projects aren't going forward because they can't find insurance. And therefore, a lot of hardhats aren't working. We need to get somebody in the Senate with whom I can work to make sure we get us a terrorism insurance bill that rewards the hardhats of America, not the trial lawyers of America.

I look forward to working with a Norm Coleman to make sure that Medicare works. See, we made a solemn promise to our seniors. The problem is, medicine has changed. It's becoming modern. Medicare is stuck in the past. There's a lot of new technologies that have helped health care become modern, new discoveries that have changed the nature of health care. But Medicare hasn't changed. I look forward to working with Senator Norm Coleman to modernize Medicare, which means prescription drugs for our seniors.

And let me give you another reason I need to work with him in the Senate. One of my most solemn obligations is to name good people to Federal benches. The Senate has done a lousy job. There are too many of my nominees that have been stalled, and therefore, we have a vacancy crisis on the Federal benches in America. And that hurts you. It hurts our citizens who need to have access to justice.

You see, they don't like my judges. They don't like the fact that I named good, honorable people who will not use the bench from

which to legislate but will use the bench to strictly interpret the Constitution. Norm and I understand we've got too many legislators in Washington. Let me say to you, we've got enough legislators in Washington. We need good, sound judges. I know I can count on his support when it comes to making sure the judiciary is strong and capable and not have any vacancies.

The biggest issue that Senator Coleman and I will be working on over the years is to protect you, is to protect the homeland, is to keep America safe from an enemy which still lurks out there, an enemy which hates because of what we love. We love freedom. We love the idea that people can worship freely in America. We love the idea that people can speak their minds. We love a free press, and we're not going to change.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. It's important to be cold-eyed realists about the world in which we live. We're on alert now in America. We understand the battlefield has come home. There's a lot of good people working on your behalf to deny the enemy. Anytime we get a hint, a scintilla of evidence, we're moving on it. That's our most important obligation.

We're doing it within the confines of the United States Constitution, but we're moving. We're disrupting. We're making sure people cannot get to the American people. We're doing everything we can. But I went to Congress because I think we can do more. And I asked them to join me in the creation of a Department of Homeland Security. I want a Department where I've got the ability to be able to turn to the American people and say, "I've got the tools necessary to protect you."

There's over 100 agencies involved with homeland security. It seemed like to me they need to be coordinated better. They need to be under one umbrella so we can set priority and, if need be, change culture. And the House of Representatives, thanks to the Members up here, passed a good bill.

It takes two Chambers to get the bill to my desk, however. The bill is stuck in the Senate. I want to explain to you why it's stuck in the Senate. It's stuck in the Senate because some Senators are trying to extract too high

a price from the President. For 40 years, ever since John Kennedy has been the President, the President has had the ability to suspend collective bargaining rules in any Department of the Federal Government when the national security is at stake.

Let me tell you what that means. If a rule stands in the way of being able to better protect the homeland, I should be able to suspend that rule for national security purposes. The Senate, because of special interests in Washington, DC, refuses to—or are trying to strip me of that power. And if they were able to do so, I would have the ability to suspend some rules in, say, the Agricultural Department but not the Department of Homeland Security.

We're threat—we're under threats from an enemy which hates us, and yet they're trying to prevent me and future Presidents from being able to do the job. I need a Senator who will support me on homeland security. I refuse to accept a lousy bill from the U.S. Senate.

But the fact is—the fact of the matter is, we're going to do everything we can at home. But the best way to assure your freedom is to hunt these killers down, one person at a time, and bring them to justice. We're making progress.

First, I want to thank the Senate and the House for passing the largest increase in defense spending since Ronald Reagan was the President. I asked for that increase because I believe strongly, just like Norm Coleman believes strongly, that anytime we put our troops into harm's way, they deserve the best pay, the best training, and the best possible equipment.

And the other reason I asked for that increase is because I wanted to send a signal to friend and foe alike, that when it comes to the defense of our freedom and the defense of our homeland, we're in this deal for the long haul.

There's not a calendar on my desk that says by such-and-such a date, we're quitting. That's not how I think. That's not how I know you think. You see, we understand our obligations to future generations. That's why I'm continuing to insist to people around the world: Either you're with us, or you're with the enemy.

And we're making progress. We're making progress, slowly but surely. We're finding them. We're hunting them down. It's a different kind of war, and it's important for you to know that. In the old days, you'd knock out a couple of tanks or shoot down an airplane or two, you're making progress. See, these folks, that's not the way they are. They hide in caves or in dark corners of the world and send youngsters to their suicidal deaths.

And so it's a different kind of war. It requires this network of people moving around, getting them on the run. Fortunately, we've got the finest military in the history of the world, and we've got them on the run, and we're going to keep them on the run.

Norm knows what I know: It doesn't matter how long it takes; we have an obligation. It's important for us to be cold-eyed realists about the world. It's important to have a Senator and a President and people in Washington, DC, who see the world really the way it is, not the way we wish it would be.

And the world is changed after September the 11th. It's changed because we're no longer safe from potential threats overseas. It used to be that oceans could protect us. It used to be that we could sit back and say, "Well, we're a protected continent because of two vast oceans." We learned a tough lesson on September the 11th. We've got to remember that lesson as we go down the road. We must take every threat to the United States seriously. We must take threats to our friends seriously.

And there's a threat which looms in the form of Saddam Hussein. I want to remind you all that this is a man who for 11 years has said he wouldn't have any weapons of mass destruction, and for 11 years, he's deceived the world.

Audience member. Liar!

The President. And we found out that—a while ago that he was close to having a nuclear weapon. We don't know how close he is today. This is a man who not only has got chemical weapons; I want you to remind your friends and neighbors that he has used chemical weapons. He has used them in his neighborhood, and incredibly enough, he has used them on his own people.

This is a man who can't stand America. He can't stand what we believe in. This is

a man who hates some of our closest friends in the Middle East.

This is a man who has had contacts with Al Qaida. This is a man who poses a serious threat in many forms, but catch this form: He's the kind of guy that would love nothing more than to train terrorists and provide arms to terrorists so they could attack his worst enemy and leave no fingerprints. This guy is a threat to the world.

I went to the United Nations because I wanted to tell this body, this august body, that I expect you to do your duty. For 16 resolutions, he's defied you. I went and said, "In the name of peace, show yourself to be effective. We want you to be an effective United Nations, not an ineffective organization like the League of Nations."

My message was to that body, I said, "Show some backbone. Disarm Saddam Hussein, just like he said he would do." But for the sake of peace and for the sake of freedom, the sake of fulfilling our obligations to future generations, if the United Nations can't act and won't act and if Saddam Hussein won't do what he said he would do, which is disarm, we will lead a coalition of nations to disarm Saddam Hussein.

I appreciate Norm Coleman's position. I appreciate the fact that he's a cold-eyed realist. I appreciate the fact that he sees the world the way it is, not the way we would hope it would be. I want you to know this about America, that if we stay tough, we stay strong, we can achieve peace. We can achieve peace, not only for ourselves, but we can achieve peace in parts of the world which have quit on peace. We're determined. We speak clearly. If we remember our values and remember that freedom is not an America's gift to the world, it is a God gift to the world, we can achieve peace.

I don't know what was going through the mind of the enemy. They must have thought the national religion of America was materialism. Therefore, we're selfish and self-absorbed. We'd take a couple of steps back after September the 11th, 2001. * They probably said, "Oh, they'd file a lawsuit or two." [Laughter] They don't understand the nature of America. They don't understand the

* White House correction.

American spirit. They don't understand American spirit. They don't understand our soul.

You see, out of the evil done to America is going to come some good. And part of that good is peace overseas, and part of that good here at home is a better tomorrow, a better America.

We must remember—and Norm understands this; that's why I'm passionate on his candidacy—he knows what I know, that amongst our plenty are people who hurt. There are people who are lonely, people addicted, people, when you say, "American Dream," they say, "What does that mean? I have no idea what the American Dream means," they say. Our attitude is, so long as any of us hurt, we all hurt, and therefore, Government must do everything it can to help. But Government is limited. See, it can hand out money, but it can't put hope in people's hearts or a sense of purpose in people's lives. That help—that happens when a fellow American puts their arm around somebody who's crying and says, "I love you, brother. I love you, sister. What can I do to make your life a better life?"

I met a guy today named John Ernston. He's volunteered 13,000 hours for the Hennepin County sheriff. He's been on what they call water patrol. He is a person trying to make a difference in somebody's life. He's volunteering his time to make his community a better place.

Talk about the American spirit, the American spirit says we'll be tough when it comes to the defense of our freedom. But the American spirit also says the new patriotism for our country means we'll serve something greater than ourself. The call to you so far as I'm concerned is: Help somebody in need; mentor a child; feed the hungry; love the homeless. And you watch what happens when the great compassion of America comes forth.

We can change this country one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time. No, the American spirit is alive and well in this country. The enemy hit us; they didn't know who they were hitting.

I'm reminded of the story of Flight 93. Flight 93 was—on that fateful day, we had citizens flying across the country. They

learned the plane they were on was going to be used as a weapon. They said goodbye to their loved ones. History will show they said a prayer. A guy said, "Let's roll." They took the plane into the ground to serve something greater than themselves. The spirit of this country is alive and well and strong.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. I believe—I believe firmly that out of the evil done to America is going to come some great good. I will boldly predict that we can achieve the peace, and we can achieve a more hopeful tomorrow for every citizen who lives in this country, because I understand America. We're the finest nation, full of the greatest people on the face of this entire Earth.

I'm honored you're here. Work hard for Norm. May God bless you, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:32 p.m. at the Xcel Energy Center. In his remarks, he referred to senatorial candidate Norm Coleman, his wife, Laurie, and his parents, Norm Sr. and Beverly Coleman; gubernatorial candidate Tim Pawlenty; John Kline, candidate for Minnesota's Second Congressional District; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The President also referred to Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota, who died in the October 25 crash of a twin engine King Air aircraft in Eveleth, MN.

Remarks in Sioux Falls, South Dakota

November 3, 2002

The President. Thank you for that warm welcome. It just seems like the other day I was here in South Dakota. [Laughter] You know, your Governor is a good buddy of mine. He's got pretty good judgment. He said, "If you think it was good in Aberdeen, if you think the crowd was great in Aberdeen, if you think the enthusiasm was high in Aberdeen, wait until you get to Sioux Falls."

We did have a great crowd in Aberdeen; about 300 or 400 people couldn't get in the hall. [Laughter] A lot of them came down from Aberdeen tonight to be at this rally, and I want to thank you all for coming down. I want to thank you for your work. And right